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SOUTHWESTERN JOURNAL OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Published by the University of New Mexico
and the Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe
in the interest of general anthropology

VOLUME 5
1949

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS
ALBUQUERQUE

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THE INTERPRETATION OF SOME DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ON CARIB CULTURE

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IN ESSENCE, the present paper is a series of commentaries on Rouse's presentation of Carib culture in Volume 4 of the *Handbook of South American Indians*.[1] The summary which he offers is excellent in many ways and will be much appreciated by those who want a précis of the scattered material on the Carib. Yet there are a number of points which need reweighting and correcting in the light of a better understanding of the documentary evidence for Carib culture in early colonial times.

If it is true, as Steward says in his "Preface" to this volume,[2] that "The Circum-Caribbean area is not only the least known of all South America, but it is perhaps the most important to problems of native American culture history," it is the more remarkable that its most richly documented sub-area, the Antilles, has received so little attention from ethnologists and ethnographers in recent decades. To the best of my knowledge, the source material has never been compiled and evaluated; and no exhaustive study of the few remaining descendants of its pre-Conquest inhabitants has been undertaken. For it is not quite accurate that "The Antillean tribes may be said to be extinct," as Steward declares on page one of this volume of the *Handbook;* nor is it true, as he asserted in his article on "The Changing American Indian," that the Black Carib of Central America "speak French."[3] Referring to Arawak Indian remnants in Cuba and Trinidad, Rouse says: "A thorough study of the customs of these two places, westernized though they are, might reveal some survivals from prehistoric times."[4] Certainly, as I have tried to show on several occasions, the Carib remnant in Dominica offers more in the way of racial and cultural survival than is commonly believed, or could possibly be guessed from the miserable photograph of St Vincent "Carib descendants" on Plate 98 of this volume.[5] On the other hand, the Black Carib of Central America, Negroid as they are today (a characteristic shared to a considerable extent by their neighbors, the less numerous Mosquito

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1 *The Circum-Caribbean Tribes* (Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology, no. 143, vol. 4, Julian H. Steward, ed., Washington, 1948).

2 *Handbook*, p. xvi.

3 *The Science of Man in the World Crisis* (New York, 1945), p. 297.

4 *Handbook*, p. 521.

5 With which compare, for example, the photographs of Dominica Caribs in Natural History, vol. 48, New York, 1941, pp. 40-49.

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"Indians"), are an offshoot of the St Vincent Caribs, whose language, and to some extent culture, they alone have conserved. Obviously, familiarity with such residual, broken, or transplanted cultures as these cannot replace an acquaintance with the early sources, but it can and does help to interpret the latter with a minimum chance of error.

These early accounts often differ, as Rouse remarks, from source to source; so that it is impossible to know where to place confidence until one has some knowledge of their authors' lives. The first French source on the Carib, Bouton's *Relation de l'Etablissement des Français en l'ile de la Martinique,* was written after a three months' stay in the West Indies; du Puis', and Armand de la Paix' accounts of the settlement of Guadeloupe, the latter largely inspired by Breton, after five years in that island. Rouse seems to have relied largely on Rochefort (in Davies' translation), and on du Tertre (la Borde and Labat came half a century later). The former was a Protestant missionary who was in the West Indies about 1650—where and for how long he does not tell us, though he admits to having got information from Auber (or Aubert), who had been Governor of Gaudeloupe, 1641-1643, and from Breton. Du Tertre, a Catholic priest, was in Guadeloupe on three occasions (1640-1642, 1643-1647, and what was almost a round trip in 1656-1657), on which he met a number of Caribs and became acquainted with Father Breton, whom he rates as *the* authority, not only on the language, but also on the culture of the Carib. Breton provided both du Tertre and Rochefort with information concerning Carib language and culture, returned the former's compliment by calling him the historian of the Antilles, but wrote of the latter's 1658 Rotterdam publication, "there is so much in it where he has followed what I gave him only in so far as he pleased;" and he cites fifteen words attributed to himself, which, he says, "ne sont point mots Sauvages."[6] Du Tertre was more outspoken, and said that Rochefort, whenever he could, had stolen from him, often turning him (du Tertre) into perfect nonsense in order to hide the theft. While such attacks are unlikely to be quite impartial, Breton's preëminence as ethnographer of the Carib must not be overlooked. Rouse says: "French missionaries made many attempts after 1650 to convert the Carib to Christianity, . . . Fathers like Raymond Breton and Philippe de Beaumont remained 25 years in Dominica."[7] Although this figure is an error on the part of Labat (1724), copied by myself (1938), and by Rouse in the *Handbook,* Breton is the only author whose account of Island Carib culture in early colonial times is based on what amounted to extensive field work, not to mention a knowledge of the lan-

6 Breton, *Dictionaire Caraïbe-Français,* Introduction, section 13.
7 *Handbook,* p. 548.

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guage. One of the first contingent of priests sent to that island, he landed in Guadeloupe, as he himself tells us, "on the eve of the feast of St Peter and St Paul" in June 1635, first went to live among the Dominica Caribs in January 1641, "depuis lequel temps jusqu'à la fin de 1653 j'ai fréquenté parmi eux, avec quelque interruption," and finally sailed again for France early in 1654.[8] From the time of his arrival in the islands, he showed a keen interest in the Caribs' language, culture, and welfare; and his last thirteen years there were spent in long spells of living among them in Dominica, interspersed with trips to Guadeloupe, St Kitts (St Christopher's), and other islands. Philippe de Beaumont, who succeeded Breton in Dominica, appears to have left, on the Caribs, only a long letter in which he pleads that their extermination should not be pursued to the bitter end, and which resulted in the treaty of March 31, 1660, which he himself signed on behalf of the Caribs of Dominica, and by which English and French both agreed to leave Dominica and St Vincent to the Carib. Of the later Fathers, la Borde (1704) does not say how much personal experience he had with the Caribs, while Labat (1724), whose stay in the islands was a long one, mentions only a two weeks' visit in January 1700 to the Caribs of Dominica, who by that time were for the most part concentrated on the windward (eastern) side of the island. In Martinique, hostilities between Carib and white began in 1655, and by 1658 nearly all the former had been driven out of the island or killed. The census of April 12, 1683, showed a total of only 61 Caribs, including women and children, for the whole island; and according to Labat (1724), only one Carib family remained in all Martinique when he went there as parish priest of Macouba. So much for the relative value of our best known sources.

"The *Carib* name for the Arawak whom they conquered in the Lesser Antilles was *Igneri*."[9] Breton does not give this name, though he has: "*Arrouagues, sont les ennemis de Caraïbes,* touálicha, f. alouágue." On the other hand, Ygneri (iñéri?) and its variants (igneri, eyerí, ieri), should be compared with Breton's "eyéri *homme*," and with the present-day Black Caribs' eiéri, iéri, *man (vir)*, in the language of the women.

"According to their traditions, they [the Carib] came into the West Indies no more than a century before the arrival of Columbus."[10] This statement also has been made, in substance, by a number of other modern authors, and I should be interested to learn its source. Breton relates one of their traditions, according to which the first Island Carib were mainland Galibis who had left the continent

8 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 415.
9 *Handbook*, p. 545.
10 *Handbook*, p. 547.

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to conquer the islands led by a Chief "small in body, but great in courage, who ate little, and drank still less"; and goes on to say how they told him that they had had kings in former times, and that the word *abouyou* was the name given to those who bore the king on their shoulders.[11] Armand de la Paix says that they were unable to give a reasonable account of how they had left the mainland and come to the islands.

> Only that, they all say, their first Kallinago [Carib] father, having left the mainland accompanied by his family, settled in Dominica. He had a long posterity and saw the nephews of his nephews, who, in their extreme cruelty, killed him by poison. But he was changed into a fish of monstrous size which they call Akáiuma, and is still full of life in their river.[12]

It is certainly not such traditions as these which can fix the date of the Caribs' first arrival in the Antilles within a century.

Of the Black Carib, Rouse states: "In 1675 a cargo of Negro slaves was shipwrecked upon St. Vincent, and they intermarried with the Indians. This *Carib*-Negro mixture became most hostile to the Europeans, and so in 1795 the English moved them from St. Vincent, first to the small island of Balliceaux offshore, and later to Ruatán Island, near the coast of Honduras. . . ."[13] In Armand de la Paix' *Relation*, we find under the year 1646: "Some Negroes of Saint Vincent of the isles, being in Saint Lucia, massacred some French people from Martinique by the order of their Carib master"; while according to the Calendar of State Papers (West Indian Colonies) for 1667, the Island of St Vincent then contained "all Indians, and some Negroes from the loss of two Spanish ships in 1635."[14] The introduction of Negroes to St Vincent goes much further back, therefore, than the shipwreck of 1675; and perhaps even to Carib raids on Puerto Rico, antedating the French and English colonization of the Lesser Antilles. According to la Borde, the Negroes in St Vincent had become as powerful as the Indians there, by his day; while twenty years later (1719) the "Black Carib" were masters of the island, outnumbering the "Yellow Caribs" to an extent which, according to Bryan Edwards, had reached the proportions of ten to one before the end of the eighteenth century. They had been on friendly terms with the French, this author

11 Breton, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230.

12 Armand de la Paix, in Rennard, p. 46. The former was head of the Dominican mission in Guadeloupe from 1643 to 1648, and reputed author of the *Relation de l'Isle de la Guadeloupe faite par les Missionnaires Dominicains à leur Général en 1647*, which was published in the latter's work.

13 *Handbook*, p. 548.

14 Armand de la Paix, in Rennard, pp. 108-109; *Calendar of State Papers*, 1661-1668, No. 1661.

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tells us moreover, since long before his time; and their enmity toward the English, aroused by the latter's insatiable land-greed and temporarily dispelled by the treaty of 1773 (which assigned them the northern and more mountainous quarter of the island), had been subsequently re-awakened by the openly expressed intentions of many English colonists to dispossess them still further. Instigated and supported by the French revolutionary leader, Victor Hugues, war between the St Vincent Carib ("Black" and "Yellow") together with the "democratical whites" on the one hand, and the English together with their slaves on the other, broke out on March 10, 1795, and continued until, "before the close of November 1796, the Charaibes and their allies had all submitted, on the terms offered to them by the British commander." The narrative continues:

> The Charaibes, including women and children, were in number nearly 5000; and the whites and people of colour amounted to scarcely less than 1000. As, after what had passed, it was much to be feared that the colonists could never again rely upon the fidelity of their uncivilized neighbours, it was finally resolved to remove the Charaibes from the colony, and they were in consequence conveyed with their families to the Island of Rattan [*sic!*], in the Bay of Honduras.[15]

Rouse continues: "The *Carib* who remained in the West Indies also intermarried somewhat with the Negroes. They continued to reside in Dominica and St. Vincent until the end of the 19th century, when they were moved to a reservation in Dominica."[16] The present *Carib Reserve* in Dominica was created in June 1903 by enlarging the boundaries of what for long had been the largest remaining Carib settlement in the island. As far as I know, no enforced removal of Caribs took place; and there are still several patches of "Carib lands" outside the *Reserve*, on which Carib families or descendants of Caribs are living today. Certainly, neither then nor at any other time were Caribs moved from St Vincent to Dominica.

"The period covered is that from 1650 to 1700. . . ."[17] Rouse nevertheless speaks of coconuts and limes, tortoise-shell fish-hooks and clay griddles, as if these things were contemporaneous, which is unlikely. Breton saw only two coconut trees (which the Caribs called palma, from the Spanish word for palm) in the whole of Dominica; and considered them rare enough to take and plant a nut at Basse Terre, Guadeloupe. As for limes, he says expressly: "they [the Caribs] hardly use them." Of turtle-shell fish-hooks, the 1647 *Relation* says: "On en voit encore chez eux, quoi qu'ils ne s'en servent plus."[18] On the other hand, as

15 Edwards, *History*, vol. 4, pp. 73-74.
16 *Handbook*, p. 548.
17 *Handbook*, pp. 549-550.
18 Breton, *Dictionaire Caribe-Français*, p. 297; Armand de la Paix, p. 68.

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the Spanish loan-words employed by the Carib of Breton's day show, they had already become familiar with iron, nails, wire, etc.

Rouse derives Columbus' "caribales" from "the term *Calinago* or *Caliso*."[18] Breton gives: Callinago (Breton's *ll* probably approaches an apical *r*; while omission of the collective suffix, -go, would give Callina) as the men's, Calliponam [karipona] as the women's name for their tribe or nation. The form "caribales" is more likely to have come from the latter than from the former term.

"*Carib* men and women had certain differences in language, which may have been due to the fact that many of the women had been captured from the *Arawak*."[20] The persistence of such differences among the modern Black Carib of Central America (as also, by all accounts, among the last native speakers in Dominica and in St Vincent), would be hard to explain on similar grounds. Rouse seems to be unaware of the fact that, by Breton's time at least, the Cariban dialect of the Igneri's former conquerors had been reduced, in the speech of the Lesser Antilles, to much the same part as had Norman French, by Chaucer's day, in that of post-Conquest England. Therefore, although the Dominica Carib told Breton that they and the Guiana Galibi were of the same descent, their language was already basically different: "Le langage de nos Caraïbes est différent de celui des Gallibys de terre ferme"; and "Diversa utrisque lingua, licet illi ab his descendisse in Insulas dicant."[21]

"No estimates of the original population of the *Carib* islands have been discovered."[22] Nevertheless, the 1647 *Relation* speaks of the Caribs being "quite four or five thousand" in Dominica, and "sans nombre" in St Vincent; and elsewhere comments:

> It perhaps be asked why there are so few of them, especially in view of the multitude of their women. They tell you that it is on account of the Christians; for, as one of them told Father Raymond, the Spaniards twice massacred all the Savages of the island of St. Christopher; and once those of Guadeloupe, of whom there escaped only one woman and her children who ran away to the mountains, and, so they say, bred there. They tried to do the same in Dominica, and managed to kill quite half of those there. Since then they have been decimated by small-pox, which they call variola, and of which some died rotting, being still ignorant of any cure for this disease. Moreover, everybody captures and carries off or kills them: Flemmings, English, Spaniards, and their Allouagues, who are their enemies.[23]

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19 *Handbook*, p. 549.
20 *Ibid.*
21 Armand de la Pein, p. 49; Breton (?), p. 132: both in Rousset.
22 *Handbook*, p. 549.
23 Armand de la Pein, pp. 112 and 48.

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Later estimates are, for St Vincent: Philip Warner's "3000 Negroes and no other island as many Indians," and Stapleton's "1500 [warriors], 600 of these bowmen are Negroes," both taken from the Calendar of State Papers for the year 1676.[24] These figures may be compared with la Borde's estimated 4000 in 1700 for the two islands of Dominica and St Vincent together, i.e., after two attempts by the British under Stapleton in 1683 to exterminate the Caribs in both islands.

"The staple food of the *Carib* was the crab. . . . They roasted the meat, seasoning it with a sauce called taumalin, a mixture of lime juice and pounded peppers with the greenish meat next to the shell of the male crab. . . . For the seasoning of fish and meat they used a sauce called coui, which was made by boiling the juice of manioc with crushed peppers, lime juice, and manioc flour."[25] As the Carib word for food does not include fish, meat, or game, which may be called by a term meaning *food adjuncts*, crab—fond of it as the Caribs were and still are—cannot properly be called their staple food, which was and is cassava, a bread or bannock made from manioc meal. Incidentally, the manioc shrub is propagated by cuttings of two or three feet long taken from the stem of an old plant, and not, as Rouse would have it in speaking of the Arawak, from the root.[26] The Carib may have taken to citrus fruits before 1700, but neither the sauce which the modern Carib call [tumálē] in Dominica and [dumári] in Central America, nor that known to Breton as "tóna *sausse*, nitomáliem *ma sausse*," calls for the employment of lime juice as an ingredient. Breton says "it is so called because the women usually make it with tomali of crab, which is oily"; and he refers us to "carlouati *poivré*," where we find:

> They put into a little earthen pot together with mouchache [that is, manioc starch], forty or fifty peppers [*Capsicum frutescens*] as big as the thumb, fish-scales, fish-bones, or the bones of agouti which they have gnawed, boil the lot in manioc-water (which is poisonous), and that is the sauce in which they dip their cassava (when they have nothing else). . . .[27]

The name of this sauce has been incorporated into the English language as "toma'll(e)y, n. Soft greenish substance (called the liver) in lobster, used as sauce. (Carib)." (Concise Oxford Dictionary). Such sauce would naturally be served in the receptacle still known in the West Indies as a coui [kuí], and made from the half of a calabash (cujete)[27a] cut in two lengthwise. Although this is one

24 *Calendar of State Papers*, 1675-1676, no. 861, and p. 499.
25 *Handbook*, p. 550.
26 *Handbook*, p. 522.
27 Breton, *Dictionnaire Caraïb-Français*, p. 109.
27a *Crescentia cujete*.

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of the words black-listed by Breton as "point mots Sauvages," he himself gives what is probably the parent Carib form under "*cousi à boire* couáikeu," phonetically ['kwtkē].

Rouse omits to mention two important classes of kitchen utensils: the mortar (ánna), and the manioc trough (batáia), both carved out of single pieces of wood, the latter being just as important to the manioc complex as the stone-chip grater (eše), the basketry squeezer (rukúma) and sifter (híbše), and the cassava-plate or griddle (butáli).

"Corn, sweetpotatoes, yams, beans, and peppers also were cultivated, the corn being made into bread as among the *Arawak*." Rouse elsewhere mentions corn beer.[28] Corn is and apparently always was of very secondary importance to the Carib, and it seems doubtful whether the Carib ever made much use of bread or beer made from it. Breton has this to say about it:

> After it has grown, that is to say two months after it has been sown, the Savages gather and roast it on the coals, then eat it. The Galibi make from it a fermented drink which is not inferior to beer. The French use it to feed poultry, while some turn it into flour, which they mix with an equal quantity of wheat flour, and make with this a fine bread which tastes quite good.[29]

Breton elsewhere describes at length the making of cassava-beer (uéku), and speaks of a beverage of boiled cassavas in connection with the couvade. On the other hand, the only use made of corn by the modern Dominica Carib is that described in the first sentence of the above quotation from Breton. Botanists usually describe yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) as of Old World origin, but it now seems certain that a species of *Dioscorea trifida*, known to the Carib as kúšu, and formerly much employed by them, was American. Two other food plants, not listed by Rouse but fairly important to the Carib of Breton's day and at the present time, are *Xanthosoma* spp. (uáho) and pumpkin (uauáiama). By "guayba," Rouse presumably means *guava*, Carib: kuiábu.

We are told that hammocks were "made of a network of cotton thread," and that "the weaving of cloth may not have been an original part of Carib culture. The women had wooden spindles for making thread and used belt looms for weaving it. They stretched the warp threads from a stick on one side of the house to a stick on the other; then two women wove in the weft, beating the threads down with a sword shaped stick."[30] Breton, on the other hand, describes the

28 *Handbook*, pp. 551-557.
29 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
30 *Handbook*, pp. 552, 555.

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weaving of hammocks on a heavy frame, similar to that employed in Guiana today, and which leaned against the wall of the house. He says:

> The Savages cut four big, round, smooth pieces of wood; two of which they lean and secure against the house-runners, while the two others are bound tightly across them, one above and one below, in proportion to the size of the bed, and around which the women arrange their cotton thread, which they handle skillfully, but without hurrying themselves over it. They leave half a foot unwoven at both extremities, and this they divide into little bundles, through which they attach a little cord called ebenebu, then bend it back at arm's length and pass it through another bundle, bend it again, and so on to the last bundle. Then they pass a stouter cord through the upper bends of the smaller cord, and this is the one by which they hang it wherever they may be to protect themselves from snakes and ants and other harmful beasts.[31]

Labat describes Carib hammocks seen some fifty years later as "une pièce de grosse toile de coton"; and goes on to say how, once the warp was set up, the women were

> obliged to pass their ball of thread under and over the warp threads, one after another, and to beat the weft down with a sort of knife made of heavy hard wood so as to make all the threads get into their places and render the work even.

From the above it would appear that heddles were not in general use; but la Borde speaks of a "roller" at the bottom of the frame, which the women turned as the weaving progressed, and states explicitly that the ends of the warp threads were left unwoven, and were not cut on completion of the hammock. From the above descriptions, as well as from modern Guiana practice, it is evident that this referred, *not* to a cloth-beam, but to a head-stick, which must have been employed, as otherwise the hammock would have had to be cut on completion, and there would have been no bundles of loops through which to pass the "little cord."

"The paint, urucú (roucou), was made by mixing oil with boiled and ground seeds from the bixa plant."[32] *Bixa orellana* L., Carib: kusúse, in the men's, and: bíke, in the women's speech, is a small tree. The dye is obtained from the waxy red aril surrounding each of the seeds, which are clustered in a sort of pod. After boiling, according to Bretton, the water was allowed to cool and the seeds rubbed between the hands to remove this aril, which then settled at the bottom of the water in the form of a waxlike cake. The prepared paint, known as kurúkuli or

31 Breton, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-193.
32 *Handbook*, p. 552.

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302 urukámbui, "closes the pores, prevents the seawater from drying on their skins, keeps off mosquitoes, and kills chigoes."[32]

114 285 [829] Carib basketry was and still is made from *Ischnosiphon arouma* (Aublet) Koernicke, the "ouallónian" of Breton's or the uarúmã of our own time and spelling, and not, as Rouse says, from "Latania" (presumably an anglicization of French latanier, from Carib alátani, which is the small fan-palm, *Coccothrinax martinicensis* Beccari), whose leaves served as thatching and for making rough sunshades, umbrellas, bags, etc., but could not possibly be employed in the typical wicker pattern and twilled basketry of the Carib. As in Breton's time, so today Carib baskets have a double wall and cover like those of the Taino described by Rouse,[34] but such baskets are and may be rendered waterproof only by the insertion of one or more intermediary layers of leaves. The *Mytilus edulis* is not found [825] in the Lesser Antilles today, and it seems probable that the "mussel" whose shells were used, according to Rouse,[35] in scraping strands employed for basketry, refers to some other species.

114 611 Although it may not be possible, as Rouse says, to substantiate Gower's statement that descent was matrilineal among the Island Carib, this feature is at least implicit in the kinship terminology.

114 595 Breton is in disagreement with Rouse's authorities on several points concerning the life cycle. Of a husband's relations with his wives, he says:

> they [the wives] have their turn month and month about, even when they are pregnant; after childbirth they [the husbands] remain without seeing them for a good while, for fear of harming the child.[36]

[843] In seeming contradiction, Rouse says that sexual intercourse was forbidden during pregnancy, and does not mention post-puerperal abstinence.[37] The solution may perhaps be found in the attitude of the modern Carib father, who says that while abstinence during pregnancy is a matter of taste, intercourse during the forty-day 114 period following birth would be injurious to the child. Rouse notes that the 846 accounts of the couvade vary considerably, his own being "taken largely from Davies, with supplemental data from La Borde:" "For several days after birth the mother fasted, eating only dried cassava and drinking warm water. The father, on the other hand, practiced the couvade. Immediately after the birth he com-

33 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
34 *Handbook*, p. 527.
35 *Handbook*, p. 554.
36 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 278.
37 *Handbook*, p. 557.

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plained of pains, went to a separate hut, and lay in a hammock."[38] Breton has answered this last statement by saying: "it is not likely that the husband should cry out like a woman in labour; on the contrary, I've seen them come from without, secretly and stealthily, a month after the birth, in order to make their retreat and fast."[39] This is, at least, more in accordance with all modern reports of the custom. Moreover, it is disconcerting if not misleading to insist upon the "otherness" of the father's part, after rightly noting that the restrictions affected both parents; especially since precautions similar to those characterizing the Carib's "couvade" were also taken at puberty, after the death of a relative or the slaying of an enemy, and by candidates for chieftaincy or shamanship. Breton nowhere mentions any special taboo on the names of the dead, while la Borde merely says that they were avoided so as not to evoke thoughts of death. The former does say, however, that names were not used as forms of address to any but children; and that everybody's real name was kept secret from all but intimates. And, while Breton mentions that his wife was the only woman who might eat with a man, his failure to report that even this was limited to the occasion of their marriage suggests that there was no hard and fast rule about such matters. A summary cannot include everything; but the studied omissions or contradictions of a man like Breton, who had read, before publishing his own work, the accounts of Armand de la Paix, du Puis, du Tertre, and Rochefort—all of whom had sought and obtained his advice and help—cannot well be ignored. My own article on the *Kinship and Social Structure of the Island Carib* resumés some of these points at greater length.[40]

Perhaps the most unsatisfactory part of the whole summary of Carib culture is the section on "Religion and Shamanism,"[41] which perpetuates the myth that the Carib invoked and made offerings to "the evil spirits (maboya)." Already Breton protested (and in the matter of religion, at least, he cannot be accused of prejudice in the Caribs' favor) that "There is in the belief of the Savages as much difference between Ichéiri & Mápoya as between God & devil among ourselves; and it is unheard of among them that any one should offer sacrifices to mápoya,"[42] while la Borde notes: "Ils craignent Máboia, mais ils ne lui rendent aucun culte." Thirty-five years ago Roth, in his *Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*, argued conclusively against this somewhat mischievous concep-

38 *Ibid.*
39 Breton, *op. cit.*, pp. 373-374.
40 Taylor, *Kinship and Social Structure; Carib Folk Beliefs.*
41 *Handbook*, pp. 561-563.
42 Breton, *Dictionnaire Caraïbe-Français*, pp. 283-284.

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tion. Breton makes it quite clear that the offerings were made to the spirits which he calls "*Dieu* Ichéiri, Iouloúca, f. Chemiin," who were, in fact, spirit-helpers of both sexes, different ages, and having belonged in life to divers nations on earth. If he does not further identify the foregoing with "*esprit* acansáncou, acámbouée, *f.* ópoyem *ou* oupoyem," nor speak of the body-part origin of these and of the mápoya and oumécou, it is doubtless because he lacked conclusive evidence of such beliefs. Five of the above Carib terms are employed by the modern Black Carib: the hiúruha (Breton's iouloúca) require no other definition than that given above, and are "owned" and invoked by búiai (shamans), and presented with offerings of food and drink as in days gone by. The áhambue (Breton's acámbouée) are spirits of the dead, and are now distinct from úfīē (Breton's oúpoyem), which is these people's name for a ghostly apparition emanating from a "bad person" who is dead. The máfia (máfuia, with the old people, and identical with Breton's mápoya) are malevolent bush-spirits, while the úmeu (Breton's oumécou) are mischievous but not very dangerous spirits frequenting the shore and tidal waters of the sea. There is no orthodox belief as to the origin of the last two; but rites to propitiate the hiúruha, as well as the spirits of the family dead, are still performed, though Creoles and other non-Caribs (to the indignation and scorn of the Carib themselves) still refer to them as "devil dances" or (in Spanish) "baile mafia."

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Such rites and feasts as Breton describes certainly took more than "several days" to prepare,[43] and Breton speaks of four months in this connection. From him it appears, moreover, that except for six or eight befeathered functionaries who danced in couples, side by side and holding one another by an arm placed around the other's neck, the people danced singly, and not "arm in arm" as Rouse says.

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Rouse cites a certain number of Carib terms, and for these at least one would expect Breton's dictionary to have been consulted. Thus, he states: "The sun (noun) was considered a male. . . . The moon (houiou) was female. . . ."[44] Breton gives huéyou (and, in the women's speech, cachi) for the *sun;* nónum (and, in the women's speech, cati) for the *moon;* treats both as masculine, and of the second says specifically: "So is *nónum* [masculine], when it means the moon, because they believe that it is a man." Also la Borde says: "They make the moon masculine, and call it *nónum.*" The story of the incestuous brother who became the moon, and of his son Hiali (to be found in the dictionary under "ierétté"),

43 *Handbook*, p. 561.
44 *Handbook*, p. 564.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
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is still told by the modern Dominica Carib, who also remember the terms huéiu *sun*, núnū *moon*, although they no longer speak the language; while the Black Carib employ uéiu *sun*, háti *moon*, both masculine. Breton's qualification ("when it means the moon") refers to the fact that this same Carib word was also employed for the *earth*. Other forms cited by Rouse, such as boyez (shaman) and Savacou (species of heron and name of constellation), are more misleading than Breton's bóye and chaouácou, since the sounds *z* and *v* did not occur in the Island Carib of the seventeenth century and later, any more than in its modern offshoot. This may seem like carping, but it is unscholarly to cite Carib forms without consulting the only author among the early sources who spoke the language.[45]

Although no ball-courts have been reported from the Lesser Antilles, and while it is probably correct in one sense that "The *Carib* lacked the ball-game," as Steward says in his introduction,[46] yet it is evident that *some* ball-game was played by them in Breton's time, since he lists in his dictionary "Atalouacayem *jouer à la paume, la renvoyer*"; and, in the French-Carib section "*paume, balle,* ou *balon à jouer* tibouele; *allons jouer à la paume* caíman ouábouyacoua."

One misses at the outset of the part devoted to the West Indies a good map, such as is given for practically every other region treated throughout the *Handbook*. The sketch-map on page 498 does not distinguish the islands of the Lesser Antilles by name, nor show their relative positions and sizes with even approximate accuracy: what I suppose to be Gaudeloupe (600 square miles) appears to be about one third the size of what is certainly meant for Tobago (114 square miles).

The above criticisms are in no wise intended to be derogatory of the author of this part of the volume, or of his work; but are meant to point out the dangers of too great an eclecticism, or of too hasty an evaluation of such chroniclers as those who wrote in early colonial times. It is only natural that sources on the Carib have, as Rouse admits, relatively more ethnographic material than those, more numerous, on the Arawak Taino. Linguistically the former group had more, and racially and culturally as much, in common with the Arawak Igneri than/or as with the continental Carib tribes; yet one sometimes cannot avoid the feeling, in reading through this part of the volume, that Rouse—perhaps unconsciously—has selected and presented his data *ad majorem Aruake gloriam*.

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45 See my *Notes on Star-Lore*. Other confusing spellings copied by Rouse are achinoin, ichieri, oumicou, as compared with Breton's achinnao, ichéiri, oumécou. In other than Carib words, he gives both "ginipa fruit" and "junipa nut," both presumably referring to *Genipa americana;* and "Lambys" for lambi (labi), the French name for the *conch*.

46 *Handbook*, p. 26.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
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